

The Colored American

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We solicit news, contributions, opinions and in fact, all matters affecting the race. We will not pay for matter, however, unless it is ordered by us. All matter intended for publication must reach this office by Wednesday of each week to insure insertion in the current issue.

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WHY ATTEMPT THE IMPOSSIBLE?

Negro education promises to be a campaign issue in several southern states. It is proposed by the "kickers" to apportion to the races the taxes paid by each. The property records are kept separate, so that the exact amount of taxes paid in by whites and blacks can be ascertained without trouble. The Macon (Ga.) News says that the Negro in the several southern states owns from one sixtieth to one-thirtieth of the property and pays that proportion of the taxes and complains that yet the Negro schools get just as large funds as the whites, and many white people on account of poverty have to do without an education to work their farms, on which they pay taxes to send Negroes to school. The News argues further that if this division of the taxes between the schools, in proportion to the amounts paid by the whites and blacks is carried out, it will reduce the appropriation for the Negro schools to a mere fraction of what it is today, in some cases to less than 5 per cent. It means that the Negro will pay for his education according to what he is worth and the whites will pay for theirs. This burden of taxation of the white people for the many Negro schools takes away much from the fund for the white schools and the News thinks the proposed measure would remedy this.

The contention of the Macon paper is poor philosophy. Division of taxes on the face of the returns could not be made equitably. Legal obligations are paid mostly by indirect methods, and the most skillful mathematician could not draw a line showing just where the receipts of one race leaves off and those of the other begins. Labor is the foundation of production and of values, and from these comes the power to pay money. The Negro is the backbone of industry in the South, and is capital's strongest pillar. He pays more than his share by his participation in production, and by the profits derived from his consumption of the necessities of life and the enjoy-

ment of a few luxuries. He contributes to the state's coffers every time he rides on a railroad, takes out a license, purchases an article from a licensed vender, or records a legal paper—to say nothing of the direct assessment against his houses, lands and personal property.

The whole argument is empty and illusory. Any school superintendent who runs for office on the issue that learning impairs the Negro's usefulness as a workman, ought to be rebuked by overwhelming defeat at the polls. As our best thinkers are claiming and proving, education is not a privilege—it is a civic right, and is necessary for the well-being of the state. The higher the degree of intelligence of the people, the stronger the force of law, the purer the society and the more harmonious are the relations existing between the several classes and clans. Education reduces crime and its cost to the government, and promotes commerce and the industrial capacity of individuals. A dollar invested in the school serves ten dollars in depreciation of property and expense of criminal prosecution.

The Negro is no exceptional being. What is good for him is good for any other race under similar conditions, what is true of him is equally true of others. The law of economics knows no color interpretation. Division of taxes based on race holdings, and its consequent retrogression in mental culture for the Negro, would be a blow to the entire South. We do not believe the better element will permit such a blunder to be made—let the "crackers" cry out ever so vehemently for it.

The Star of Zion's editor is a careful reader of The Colored American. Nothing concerning Zion and her doings escapes the keen eye of Brother J. W. Smith.

THE AFRO AMERICAN COUNCIL ON TRIAL

The esteemed gentlemen at the head of the National Afro-American Council should not mistake the attitude of The Colored American for one of hostility. Far from it. A few weeks ago we published an estimate of the work done at St. Paul from facts that were found in the official reports of the delegates, assisted by the accounts in the daily press and the comments of many who themselves were present and protested against the methods by which the "slate" was elected. Organizations are not above honest criticisms, and no one is more disappointed than The Colored American that the Council has not accomplished more in the five years of its existence, yet no one has more cheerfully given it credit for what has been done. If the people are lethargic, we are doing our full duty toward stirring them up. If outspoken sentiments will do anything to awaken the nation to a realization of our desires we are doing that each week. Not one word of objection have we put forth against a single officer chosen at St. Paul—and we shall not utter one. On the contrary, we are urging them on to make the Council what it started out to be, and are counselling the race to get together in local councils so as to bring the national body closer to the masses. We object to a heterogeneous organization doing business on paper, and which, in the nature of things must be controlled by a few each year by main force, because of a lack of responsibility of delegates to a definite constituency. Let the organizers get to work. Appoint local organizers in each state, and see if six months do not produce hopeful results. Let us not get red in

the face and call folks hard names because of an honorable difference of opinion as to methods of procedure. Washington City has shown the efficacy of the local organization. What has been done here on a large scale can be done on a smaller scale in New York, Boston, Jersey City, Philadelphia, Chicago, Louisville, Indianapolis, St. Louis and Richmond. What is being done in any of these places along the lines indicated? With the sturdy work of which Mr. Fortune is capable, the Louisville meeting can be made historic—but a repetition of the scenes that have occurred at some of the previous meetings will not help the race at large. We say again the Council must build from the ground upward. The local organization must precede the national federation.

"Chickens will come home to roost." Julius F. Taylor, editor of the Chicago Broad-Axe, has just completed a sentence of five days jail, and paid a fine of \$50 for criminal libel, on charges instituted by Capt. Hannibal Carter. The allegations made by Taylor involved the chastity of a woman now dead, but she had friends who were determined to protect her memory. Taylor was unable to substantiate his statements—hence the conviction and punishment. People who go about circulating scandalous rumors cannot be too careful, for rumor in most instances is a liar of monstrous proportions.

GOV. AYCOCK'S DRASTIC MEASURES.

Although Gov. Aycock became the chief executive of North Carolina during a reign of terror and was considered the representative of the lawless elements, he is agreeably surprising the respectable people of the state by his rigid stand for law and order and for the education of the masses, black and white. In this respect he far outclasses the former governor, one D. L. Russell who was enrolled as a member of the republican party, but who was too much of a moral and physical coward to be a credit to any organization. When two colored boys were lynched at Salisbury not long ago, Governor Aycock without hesitation, offered rewards for the apprehension of the lynchers, aggregating \$50,000. In accord with the Governor's policy, the law officers have pronounced such crimes murder, and Judge Shaw on July 13th, issued the first bench warrant of the kind ever known in North Carolina for the arrest of the person alleged to have been guilty of taking the life of the colored boys. Drastic measures like these are the antidotes for the lynching disease.

So, in spite of the atmosphere of culture that pervades the groves of Chautauqua, N. Y., the serpent of race prejudice will creep in. Amelie W. Sullivan, superintendent of the Negro schools of Augusta, Ga., was invited to deliver an address at that place, but when she was found to be a Negress, her reception was very frigid and she had a hard time getting the most meager accommodations, being turned away from several places. She complained through the local papers, but the author ties defended themselves by claiming that they did not know their guest was a Negress when the invitation was extended. Evidently Miss Sullivan's Irish name deceived them—but nevertheless, the country has been given an opportunity to learn that a few asses are to be found, even

in the supposed garden spot of liberality—Chautauqua.

If the democrats insist upon restricting the ballot to a few intelligent Negroes, they will tie a millstone to the necks of the lily-white republicans, for the more highly educated a voter is the more seriously must he be reckoned with.

It is hoped that the fakirs who are dunning well-disposed white people for subscriptions to establish an industrial school modeled after Washington's famous institute at Tuskegee will be unmasked before popular confidence in honest Negro traveling agents is shaken.

The constitutional amendments adopted by the South to keep the Negro down will fail of their purpose. The forces of nature are opposed to artificial restriction, and the Negro's kinetic energy and mental expansion wreck the entire infamous fabric of unjust repression.

A would-be rapist, who attempted an assault upon his niece at Bristol, Va., got off with a fine of \$90. Correspondent Menard thinks if he had accomplished his purpose, the fine would have been raised to \$200. It is scarcely necessary to add that this miscreant was encased in a white skin.

We hear a great deal of fuss raised about the Negro covering up the crimes of the race, and defending malefactors from the consequences of their evil doings. As a matter of fact, when a Negro criminal is apprehended, it is generally upon information furnished by one of his own race. These same kickers are silent as the grave, however, when a white miscreant who has committed an outrage against a Negro woman goes unwhipped of justice. There should be no color in crime or in the administration of law.

Mr. J. R. Clifford, a fifth-rate lawyer, who lives in Martinsburg, W. Va., and publishes a patent back newspaper complains because The Colored American has ceased to exchange with his "hand bill." The Colored American has a large exchange list already and henceforth will refuse to exchange with newspapers whose editors indulge in billingsgate and falsehood. These same small bore editors not only purloin the columns of The Colored American and use its matter as their own, but abuse it. The day of guttersnipe journalism is over and we have no time to give to exchanges of this class. What is true of the Martinsburg hand bill is true also of the Cleveland mud scow.

It takes nerve to win out, but a stiff stand will whip a white man to a recognition of the rights of Negroes if his pocket can be made to suffer. A white capitalist thinks more of his dollars than he does of his prejudices, and he "holler" when he begins to lose more money than he deems his whims to be worth. We have said this many times, but the truth is more and more apparent as we go along. The colored people of Montgomery, Ala., refused to ride in the jim crow car recently, when the rule was attempted. When they had walked around the town a few days, the street car company weakened at the loss of good coin, and decided to let the colored people ride where they pleased. No price is too great to pay for genuine self-respect.